growing railway service and the need for such an overbridge;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to start construction work; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and whether it would be included in the next Annual Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) to (c) A proposal for replacement of level crossing No. 55 by a Road overbridge was received from Municipal Corporation of Solapur but the proposed bridge was found prohibitively costly. Two alternative proposals were framed after joint inspection with local officials. Municipal Corporation has not conveyed their decision so far.

Sanctioning of an Overbridge on Solapur-Hubli Section

3466. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway Board has considered to sanction an overbridge in place of the present railway level crossing on Solapur-Hubli section in South Central Railway and whether the required survey has been undertaken;

(b) if so, by when the construction is likely to be taken up and by what date it is likely to be completed; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) to (c) A proposal for constructing Road overbridge in replacement of level crossing No. 55-B on B.G. line of Central Railway and corresponding M.G. level crossing was considered in response to Municipal Corporation, Solapur's request for an overbridge at this location but found too costly. After joint inspection of site by the Railway and Local officials two alternative proposals were framed. Municipal Corporation has not conveyed their decision.

Decreasing the retirement age of railway engine driver

3467. DR. NARREDDY THULASI REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Research Designs and Standard Organisation (R.D.S.O.) of Railways has recommended to decrease the retirement age of Railway Engine drivers to arrest railway accidents; and

(b) if so, what *is* the reaction of Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) and (b) The Traffic Standards Directorate of Research Designs and Standard Organisation have in their report on "Recruitment and Training of Engine Crew to improve their Operational Efficiency and Safety" submitted in February, 1989 *inter-alia* recommended that drivers should be ordinarily retired at the age of 55 years from footplate duties. Subsequently, R.D.S.O. indicated that a study has been taken up which will have a bearing on the retention of drivers on footplate duties beyond the age of 55 years. Decision will depend on the recommendation of R.D.S.O.

Grievances of Railway Pensioners of Asansol

3468. SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the railway pensioners of Asansol have sent several representations to the authorities for redressal of the grievances; and

(b) if so, what are the details of their grievances and what actions have been taken for redressal?